

Why Do Hunters Wear Orange?

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GARDEN GROVE, CA, UNITED STATES, September 18, 2022 / EINPresswire.com/ -- September typically marks the beginning of deer hunting season for firearm hunters in most states. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, there are over 15 million licensed hunters nationwide. Most of them will return to the fields this month wearing high-visibility orange vests, hats, and accessories.



Why Hunters Wear Orange

Why do hunters wear orange instead of earth tones and camouflage patterns? Learn everything one needs to know about orange apparel for hunters and its role in hunter safety.

Why Do Hunters Wear Orange Gear?

The shade of orange used on many types of hunting equipment like vests, hats, tarps, and hunting blind covers is called blaze orange, safety orange, or hunter orange.

The primary reason hunters wear blaze orange equipment is safety. Hunters have selected this specific shade of orange for two reasons: it is an unnatural color, not seen in nature, and it is one of the most highly-visible colors to the human eye, even in low-light conditions.

From a hunter's point of view, blaze orange increases visibility to other hunters, similar to how the yellow paint on school buses increases visibility to other road users. However, and most importantly for hunting effectiveness, blaze orange does not make hunters more visible or easier to spot from a deer's point of view.

Unlike human eyes, which can perceive all three primary colors (red, green, and blue), deer eyes are dichromatic, meaning they can only perceive two primary colors. More specifically, deer can only see in shades of green and blue.

Studies conducted by University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) wildlife researchers have shown that, from a deer's point of view, blaze orange is indistinguishable from the greens and browns of natural foliage.

A well-known infographic by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) showcases a simulated example of deer vision to show hunters what blaze orange equipment looks like to a deer. The color appears between yellow and brown, visually similar to trees and bushes, so it will not give away your vantage point or location.

Is Blaze Orange a Legal Requirement?

Why do hunters wear orange, even when not hunting deer? In addition to safety, many state and local laws mandate the use of blaze orange hunting apparel.

The use of blaze orange hunting clothes and equipment is [mandatory in 42 out of 50 states](#). With few exceptions, these laws apply to all hunts, not just deer hunting.

Although the remaining 8 states do not impose any legal requirements, local laws and wildlife agencies still strongly recommend that hunters use blaze orange.

Types of Legal Requirements

Among the 42 states that impose blaze orange legal requirements, there are two types of minimum coverage rules: by surface area or clothing type.

- States with a surface area law require hunters to wear a legal minimum number of square inches of approved orange clothing above the waist, designated by law as either safety orange, hunting orange, or blaze orange. Minimum requirements typically range from 100 to 500 square inches. Some states use the percentage rule instead of square inches (e.g., clothing that is "at least 50%" blaze orange).

- States with a clothing type law typically require hunters to wear approved above-waist orange clothing, such as vests, blazers, coats, hats, and gloves. One example is a [blaze orange high-visibility safety reflective vest](#).

Such states may impose specific clothing types (e.g., must wear a hat) or require particular body parts to be covered (e.g., must cover the head).

- Some states impose both types of requirements simultaneously. For example, Utah law requires hunters with centerfire firearms to cover a minimum of 400 square inches with headgear and upper body clothing (chest and back).

Therefore, state hunting legislations regarding the use of blaze orange can be divided into four primary categories:

- States with no requirements
- States with a surface area law
- States with a clothing type law
- States with both a surface area and clothing type law

Are Blaze Orange Clothes Effective?

In a 2019 statement to New York state hunters, NYSDEC provided statistics regarding hunter safety and the effectiveness of blaze orange equipment. According to NYSDEC, hunters wearing adequate blaze orange clothing are seven times less likely to be shot.

Additionally, none of all firearm-related hunting incidents reported in the state between 2009 and 2019 involved hunters wearing blaze orange. All hunters mistakenly shot at or killed in New York during this 10-year period were not wearing blaze orange.

Statistics collected in other states support the findings in New York. In a 2010 report by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the agency surveyed multiple states that adopted a law requiring hunters to wear blaze orange.

The survey compared the number of incidents and fatalities in two 5-year periods: before the law's adoption and after. According to the study, fatalities decreased by 40%, and the total number of incidents decreased by 22%.

Hunt Safely

Find a supplier of high-quality, high-versatility [outdoor apparel](#) that hunters, anglers, and other outdoors enthusiasts can use to remain safe and visible. High-visibility reflective hunting vests are one option that is lightweight and has numerous convenient features to enhance your hunting trip.

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